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Local Scribes Recognized By Florida Writers Association

Residents received gold, silver and bronze awards in the Royal Palm Literary Award Competition.

By **AMANDA VALDERRAMA**
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Villagers received gold, silver and bronze awards Oct. 19 as part of a statewide writing competition.

They were winners in the Florida Writers Association's Royal Palm Literary Award Competition. The association recognized writers for their published and unpublished works at a four-day annual conference in Altamonte Springs.

Eight local residents took home awards and were excited to find out they won.

Clay Gish won a gold award in the published blog or article category for her piece titled "Pursuing Pele by Air, Sea and Land."

"It's a wonderful experience," said Gish, of the Village of Rio Grande. "I was shaking as I walked up to the podium."

Margaret Best, of the Village of Bonnybrook, won a silver award in the published autobiography or memoir category for her book, "A Soldier's Daughter."

Mark Newhouse, of the Village of Virginia Trace, won a gold award and the published book of the year prize for his historical novel, "The Devil's Bookkeepers: Book 1: The Noose."

He also submitted a second novel, titled "The Devil's Bookkeepers: Book 2: The Noose Tightens," which won a bronze award in the unpublished historical fiction category.

His books are set during the Holocaust and focus on love, friendship and sacrifice.

Another proud moment for Newhouse was seeing his son, Keith Newhouse, win a silver award in the published children's picture book category for "My Tio's Pulse," which explains what happened during the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando and is intended to help families open up discussions with their children about difficult topics.

"I had tears in my eyes when he won," Mark said. "He amazed me by getting 20 artists to donate their illustrations."

Rita Boehm, of the Village of Charlotte, took home the gold award for best children's book for her picture book called "Bluebirds in the Garden." The book was about a family of bluebirds that chose her yard as a place to raise their family.

Paula Tucker, of the Village of Belvedere, received a silver award in the unpublished autobiography or memoir category for "Surviving: A Kent State Memoir." It focuses on the 1970 shooting of students by Ohio National Guardsmen during a protest at Kent State University against the bombing of Cambodia by the United States.

Lawrence Martin, of the Village of Hillsborough, won a bronze award in the published short story category for his novel, "My Deal With You Know Who." His story is about a man who begins playing piano and decides to sell his soul to the devil in order to become a great player.

Martin's inspiration came from his frustrations of trying to learn how to play piano after retirement.

Margaret Wacker won the bronze award in the published educational or informational category for her novel, "Memory Lane," which consists of photo prompts to help trigger memories in patients with dementia.

"It is an opportunity for those with this disease to experience pleasant memories that put them in touch with who they were in the past," the Village of Glenbrook resident said.

Chris Malingier, of Summerfield, received a silver award in the unpublished novella category with his book titled "Scrubbed."

PAULA
STONE
TUCKER
*Village
of Belvedere*



Paula Stone Tucker, of the Village of Belvedere, witnessed a pivotal moment in history. Now she has put her recollections down on paper in the form of a book titled "Surviving: A Kent State Memoir."

The book gives her personal story of the events of May 4, 1970, when she was attending Kent State University. Tucker, who was pregnant at the time, stood 30 yards

away from the Ohio National Guard when they began firing upon the students.

The book also talks about her life after Kent State as a journalist and mother.

"I wanted younger people to know about that time in history," Tucker said. "There have been books written through a historical perspective. This is a more personal account of the time."

The idea to write the book floated around in her mind for many years, but it wasn't until she came to The Villages and joined various writing groups that she started working on it.

"Surviving," which recently won the silver medal from the Florida Writers Association for memoir writing, is available at amazon.com and at sunburypress.com.

—Michael Fortuna, *Daily Sun*

reading room



BEST-SELLER LIST
WEEK OF NOV. 11

VILLAGES AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT:

THE CASE OF THE CRAZY CHICKEN SCRATCHES

by Mark H. Newhouse,
Village of Virginia Trace

Middle-grade fiction

When teenager Brodie Adkins was sent by his recently divorced mother to live with his uncle, he had no idea he would be helping him defend the mythical monsters and fictional folk who live in Monstrovina — a secret sector of the United States where anything can happen. In this award-winning third sequel to *Welcome to Monstrovina* and *The Case of the Disastrous Dragon*, Brodie and his uncle must prove that a man who turned his house into a zoo isn't crazy, while also confronting his feelings about his parents' divorce.



By Mark H. Newhouse

Q: WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO WRITE YOUR BOOK?

A: I loved Perry Mason and Sherlock Holmes as a boy. Wanting to be a lawyer like Mason gave me a goal that helped avoid the problems many of my friends had. Later, as a classroom teacher, I began helping my students set life goals. I wanted to create a Perry Mason for kids today, one that would introduce them to the life of lawyers in a fun and unique series of mysteries. I loved the idea that uncle Jasper Doofinch and Brodie would be able to solve cases in a way that could make kids and adults laugh.

Q: WHAT DO YOU HOPE READERS TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOKS?

A: My hope is that this series will help kids learn about law and see how important it is to solve problems. Brodie faces the problems every kid has, especially children of divorce. He is angry, lonely and confused. My books use humor and fantasy to help children understand they aren't alone.

Q: WHAT CLUBS, ACTIVITIES AND HOBBIES DO YOU ENJOY?

A: I was the founding president of Writers League of The Villages and the originator and chairperson of more than a dozen author showcases, now called The Central Florida Book & Author Expo. I also founded the Writers 4 Kids club.



Available on Amazon

VILLAGES AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT:

**A GIFT TO THE NATION:
FROM OHIO AND THE WAYNE
NATIONAL FOREST**
by Dan Kincaid, Village of Dunedin

In 1987, one of the smallest national forests in the country, located in the midst of the hardwood forests of southeastern Ohio, was selected to provide the Christmas tree, a Norway spruce, for our nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C. "A Gift to The Nation" tells how the Wayne National Forest came to receive that honor and how a small, dedicated group of forest service employees, local organizations, agencies, schools, businesses and citizens rallied around the project to make it one of the most successful in the history of the program.



Q: WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO WRITE YOUR BOOK?

A: I coordinated this project from start to finish: locating the tree, the actual tree cutting, the send-off ceremony and getting the tree transported to the U.S. Capitol. I wanted to capture the history of this event while I could still recall everything.



Q: WHAT DO YOU HOPE READERS TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOK?

A: How a small group of people from federal, state, county and city agencies can work together with local businesses, schools and individual volunteers to make a nationally significant event come together.

Q: WHAT CLUBS, ACTIVITIES AND HOBBIES DO YOU ENJOY?

A: Softball, billiards, warm winters and writing.

Available on Amazon